

**Written Testimony of Laura Anderson of Wethersfield, CT,  
Before the Connecticut General Assembly, Public Health Committee, February 28, 2014.**

**Testimony in support of SB126, *An Act Concerning Children's Exposure to Chemicals.***

Dear Members of the Committee on Public Health:

I am writing to express my support for SB126, An Act Concerning Children's Exposure to Chemicals. As I see it, SB126 is simply a much needed measure to create awareness among our representatives about particular chemicals of high concern to children. It is a precautionary step in addressing what is becoming a very serious and urgent public health issue.

This bill's passage is important to me as a citizen of Connecticut and, especially, as a parent of two children. First, current and past bio-monitoring studies reveal that umbilical cord blood of our newborns today has on average over 200 industrial and consumer product chemicals.

Second, along with this evidence of chemical exposure, there is a large body of scientific evidence linking exposure to toxic chemicals from consumer products, beginning in the womb, with the rise in many serious diseases. Brain cancer and leukemia among children have risen by 20% since the 1970's. Further disturbing is a dramatic rise in learning and behavioral disorders including autism and attention deficit hyperactive disorder. Autism has had a ten-fold increase over the last 15 years! There has also been a rise in reproductive disorders with 40% more women having difficulty conceiving and maintaining a pregnancy in 2002 compared to women in 1982.

As a person who participated in a bio-monitoring study in 2007 (ISITINUS.org), I was surprised to learn that, even though I try to live a healthy life, my test revealed that all of the particular chemicals for which we were monitored are in my body. I truly understand that we are ALL affected by exposure to toxins in our environments. However, the risk to the developing fetus and young children is greater.

When it comes to our children, we must move our policies toward erring on the side of caution by educating ourselves about chemicals of concern and by taking action to protect our children from toxic chemicals. As always, this should be our most important priority. Passage of this bill will begin to do that.

SB126 has no fiscal impact. The bill simply requires the Department of Public Health to inform the legislature about chemicals of concern to children based on toxicity and exposure

hazard. I can't see any good reason why parents should not have the right to know what is in the products they use to care for their children.

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Toy industry and Chemical Industry lobbies argue that this problem is being addressed at the federal level. They assert that a black list of chemicals will harm business in Connecticut and say that this legislation will cost money. They also point to the Chemical Innovations Institute as an organization that already serves this purpose.

The fact is the Toxic Substances Control Act is not likely to be reformed soon enough and the American Chemical Association is spending time and money to fight any changes to it. SB126 in Connecticut is unlikely to harm business and will more likely move business toward using safer alternatives. This would put Connecticut in a leading role and perhaps create businesses working to move toward using safer alternatives.

The real story is that the Chemical Innovations Institute was established to act as a resource to businesses who express an interest in using safer chemicals. Identifying and informing the legislature about chemicals of high concern to children would further begin to protect children by making our representatives aware of the problem. As far as I know, Connecticut's Department of Public Health is not currently informing our representative about harmful chemicals to children.

As stated earlier, there is no fiscal impact with SB126. However, health care, educational and special care costs associated with childhood diseases and disorders are already a great financial burden and will continue to increase. I urge you to please pass SB126 *An Act Concerning Children's Exposure to Chemicals*.

Laura Anderson  
Campaign for Toxic Free Kids